(b) if so, whether his Ministry is extending any assistance to consolidate the existing efforts and spread the NPM activity into the remaining districts of Andhra Pradesh and other parts of the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) As per the information received from the State, the Department of Agriculture, Andhra Pradesh, has not taken up Non-Pesticidal Movement (NPM) programme. Government of India and State Government are supporting the conduct of Farmers' Field Schools in Integrated Crop Management Practices. Farmers' Field Schools aim at reducing the cost of cultivation through judicious use of pesticides, and adoption of integrated pest management practices. The Department also organizes Farmers' Field. Schools in organic farming of rice, cotton, chillies, sugarcane, maize, pulses, oilseeds and vegetables, wherein, emphasis is on use of organic manures and bio-pesticides. Due to the training to farmers through Farmers' Field Schools and Farmers Training Centres in the districts, the pesticide consumption in the State has come down substantially.

(d) The policy of the Government in plant protection sector is Integrated Pest Management, which is an environment friendly broad ecological approach for managing pest problems. It encompasses pest control techniques such as cultural, mechanical and biological including judicious use of chemical pesticides.

Suicides in Maharashtra

1378. SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for the abnormally large number of farmer suicides in Maharashtra noticed during last several years;

(b) the list of farmer suicides during the last three years in Maharashtra, location-wise, district-wise and year-wise;

(c) the details of relief measures announced so far to provide assistance or relief to the families and schemes announced for assistance in the event of failure or destruction of their crops; and

(d) the details of action proposed to sanction special relief package to these farmers' families, district/location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) A fact finding team constituted by the Planning Commission, to study rural distress and disparities in regional development in Maharashtra, with particular emphasis on Vidarbha region, identified main causes for perception of acute distress among the farmers as lack of credit availability, lack of irrigation facilities, high cost of production and low yield, high cost of seeds and their poor quality, inadequate marketing support and

ineffective agricultural extension services. The Statement showing district-wise and year-wise suicides by the farmers, as reported by State Government, is enclosed (*See* below).

(c) and (d) In the event of natural calamities, such as, drought/flood, relief is provided under Calamity Relief Fund and the National Calamity Contingency Fund. Calamity Relief Fund is a fund available with the State Government to provide immediate relief. For the year 2007-08, allocation of Rs. 4258.85 crore is available to which the share of Central Government is Rs. 3194.14 crore. For severe natural calamities where the relief expenditure cannot be accommodated within the CRF, additional funding from the Central Government is provided under the National Calamity Contingency Fund.

A Rehabilitation Package for 31 Districts with reports of high number of suicides in the four States of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Kerala, involving a total amount of Rs. 16978.69 crore is being implemented. The package is under implementation in 6 Districts in Vidarbha of Maharashtra at a total cost of Rs. 3873.26 crore. These Districts are Amravati, Akola, Yeotmal, Buldhana, Washim and Wardha. Various items of assistance include ex-gratia assistance from Prime Minister's National Relief Fund, interest waiver, assured irrigation, seed replacement, watershed development, micro irrigation, horticulture development, extension services, and subsidiary income services.

Besides, the Government has taken a number of initiatives to alleviate the problems of the farmers including small and marginal farmers. These, *inter-alia*, include the announcement of a credit policy in the year 2004 to double the flow of credit to the agriculture sector in three years and reduction rate of interest on crop loan up to Rs. 3 lakh at a rate of interest of 7% per annum from Kharif 2006-07. In case of natural calamities, there is a provision of rescheduling of outstanding loans as per guidelines of Reserve Bank of India. National Agricultural Insurance Scheme is being implemented with the objective of protecting the farmers against the crop losses occurring on account of natural calamities.

Statement

District-wise and year-wise Distribution of suicides in Maharashtra (as reported by State Government)

Sl. No	Division/ District	2004	2005	2006	2007 (Upto 30.4.2007)
1	2	3	4	5	6
Aurangabad Division					
1	Aurangabad	13	4	32	3
2	Beed	11	12	124	29
3	Hingoli	7	6	20	4
4	Jalna	19	6	34	1

1	2	3	4	5	6
5	Latur	5	6	17	7
6	Osmanabad	5	3	33	11
7	Nanded	28	11	61	27
8	Parbhani	6	10	52	9
	TOTAL:	94	58	373	91
Amravati Division					
1	Akola	46	43	174	27
2	Amravati	100	102	269	77
3	Buldhana	80	67	306	62
4	Washim	44	26	185	66
5	Yavatmal	142	167	360	93
	TOTAL:	412	405	1294	325
Nagpur Division					
1	Bhandara	7	12	49	9
2	Chandrapur	11	17	49	21
3	Gadchiroli	6	4	17	3
4	Gondia	6	6	22	5
5	Nagpur	20	15	73	21
6	Wardha	29	26	154	50
	TOTAL:	79	80	364	109
Nasik Division					
1	Ahemadnagar	1	4	40	8
2	Dhule	3	2	41	10
3	Jalgaon	25	24	79	17
4	Nandurbar	4	-	5	-
5	Nasik	5	3	38	8
	TOTAL:	38	33	203	43
Pune Division					
1	Pune	-	2	26	2
2	Sangli	2	2	20	11
3	Solapur	1	8	26	5
4	Satara	4	4	34	16

1	2	3	4	5	6
5	Kolhapur	2	3	12	5
	TOTAL:	9	19	118	39
	Konkan Division				
	Thane	-	-	3	-
	Raigad	-	-	-	-
	Ratnagiri	-	-	-	-
	Sindhudurg	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL:	-	-	3	-
	GRAND TOTAL:	632	595	2355	607

Reduction of foodgrains production

†1379. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to unavailability of sufficient fertilizers the production of agriculture and foodgrains has come down heavily during the last three years; if so, the details thereof;

(b) the names of the States in which production of foodgrains has come down due to shortage of fertilizers alongwith the names of such foodgrains; and

(c) the plan Government are going to formulate to meet the shortage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) Following table gives the fertilizer consumption and production of foodgrains, oil seeds, sugarcane and cotton for the years 2004-05 to 2006-07:

(Million Tonnes)

Year	Fertilizer Consumption	Production			
		Foodgrains	Oilseeds	Sugarcane	Cotton#
2004-05	18.40	198.36	24.35	237.09	16.43
2005-06	20.34	208.60	27.98	281.17	18.50
2006-07*	22.05	216.13	23.88	345.31	22.70

Million bales of 170 kg each.

* 4th Advance Estimates as on 19.07.2007

The fertilizer consumption and production of foodgrains, sugarcane and cotton shows an increasing trend during 2004-05 to 2006-07. Oilseeds production in

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.